

CLAIMS

1. A reclosable package comprising:

a receptacle comprising first and second receptacle walls that oppose each other and an interior space disposed between said first and second receptacle walls;

5 a flexible zipper comprising first and second zipper strips that are mutually interlockable, said interior space being enclosed when said zipper is closed; and

10 a header that shrouds said zipper, said header comprising first and second header walls joined to each other in a first zone along a top of said header, and said first header wall having a cutout in a corner of said header so that a portion of said second header wall is offset relative to said first header wall in said corner.

15 2. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, further comprising a slider mounted to said zipper, said slider being movable in a first direction along said zipper for opening said zipper and movable in a second direction along said zipper for closing said zipper.

3. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein the ends of said header are not sealed.

20 4. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein each of said first and second zipper strips is flanged.

5. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein each of said first and second zipper strips is flangeless.

6. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein said first receptacle wall and said first header wall are respective portions of a first sheet

of film material, and said second receptacle wall and said second header wall are respective portions of a second sheet of film material.

5           7. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein said second header wall has a line of weakened tear resistance that extends laterally across at least a portion of the width of said second header wall and at an elevation below interlocked profiles of said first and second zipper strips.

8. The reclosable package as recited in claim 7, wherein said line of weakened tear resistance comprises a multiplicity of spaced perforations.

10           9. The reclosable package as recited in claim 7, wherein said line of weakened tear resistance comprises a scoreline.

10. The reclosable package as recited in claim 7, wherein said line of weakened tear resistance begins at one side of said second header wall at an elevation below the lowest point of said cutout in said first header wall.

15           11. The reclosable package as recited in claim 1, wherein one of said first and second receptacle walls has a pocket formed therein, further comprising a product residing in said pocket.

12. The reclosable package as recited in claim 11, wherein said first and second receptacle walls are hermetically sealed to each other along an entire periphery that surrounds said pocket.

20           13. A reclosable package comprising:

first and second sheets of film material sealed together on three sides to form a receptacle having a mouth and an interior space and sealed across at least a portion of a fourth side to form a header that shrouds said mouth; and

25           a flexible zipper shrouded by said header and comprising first and second zipper strips that are mutually interlockable, said first zipper strip being

joined to said first sheet and said second zipper strip being joined to said second sheet, said mouth of said receptacle being closed when said zipper is closed,

5 wherein said first sheet has a cutout in a corner of said header so that a portion of said second sheet in that corner is offset relative to said first sheet.

10 14. The reclosable package as recited in claim 13, wherein said second sheet has a line of weakened tear resistance that extends laterally across at least a portion of the width of said second sheet and at an elevation below interlocked profiles of said first and second zipper strips.

15 15. The reclosable package as recited in claim 13, wherein one of said first and second sheets has a pocket formed therein, further comprising a product residing in said pocket.

16 16. The reclosable package as recited in claim 15, wherein said first and second sheets are hermetically sealed to each other along an entire periphery that surrounds said pocket.

17. A method of manufacture comprising the following steps:

laying out a bottom film having first and second mutually parallel edges;

20 forming a cutout in the bottom film adjacent the first edge;

placing a zipper closer to the first edge of the bottom film than to the second edge but not overlapping the cutout, the zipper being generally parallel to the first and second edges;

joining the zipper, as placed, to the bottom film;

25 placing a top film over the bottom film with the zipper therebetween, a portion of the top film overlying the cutout;

joining the top film to the zipper; and

joining the top film to the bottom film.

18. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the cutout is formed by cutting.

5           19. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the cutout is formed by punching.

20. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the cutout is formed by melting.

10           21. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising the step of cutting the top and bottom films and the zipper along two parallel lines that run perpendicular to the zipper, one cut line extending from the first edge to the second edge and the other cut line extending from the cutout to the second edge.

15           22. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising the step of forming a line of weakened tear resistance in the top film, the line of weakened tear resistance being parallel to the zipper.

23. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the cutout is triangular.

20           24. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein said joining steps are performed by applying heat and pressure.

25. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising the steps of thermoforming a pocket in the bottom film and then placing product in the pocket.

25           26. The method as recited in claim 25, wherein said step of joining the top film to the bottom film comprises hermetically sealing the top film to the bottom film along an entire periphery that surrounds the pocket.

27. A method of manufacture comprising the following steps:

forming a cutout along a first edge of a web of film material having a second edge parallel to the first edge;

5 joining a zipper to the web, the zipper not overlapping the cutout; and being generally parallel to the first and second edges;

making a reclosable package that incorporates the joined zipper and web, the reclosable package having a header that shrouds the zipper, with the cutout being located in one corner of the header.

10 28. The method as recited in claim 27, wherein said package making step comprises the following steps:

folding the web so that the first and second edges are generally aligned, with respective portions of the web overlapping the cutout and the zipper; and

15 joining respective marginal portions of the folded web to form the header.

29. The method as recited in claim 27, wherein said package making step comprises the following steps:

placing a second web over the first web with the zipper between the webs, a portion of the second web overlying the cutout;

20 joining the second web to the zipper; and

joining the second web to the first web.

30. The method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the steps of thermoforming a pocket in the first web and then placing product in the pocket before the second web is placed over the first web.

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31. A reclosable package comprising:

a receptacle comprising first and second receptacle walls that oppose each other and an interior space disposed between said first and second receptacle walls;

5 a flexible zipper comprising first and second zipper strips that are mutually interlockable, said interior space being enclosed when said zipper is closed; and

10 a header that shrouds said zipper, said header comprising first and second header walls joined to each other in a first zone along a top of said header, and said first header wall having a line of weakened tear resistance across a corner of said header so that a corner portion of said first header wall can be torn away from the remainder of said first header wall when said corner of said header is pulled with sufficient force.

15 32. The reclosable package as recited in claim 31, wherein said line of weakened tear resistance comprises a multiplicity of spaced perforations.

33. The reclosable package as recited in claim 31, wherein said line of weakened tear resistance comprises a scoreline.

20 34. The reclosable package as recited in claim 31, wherein said first header wall has another line of weakened tear resistance that extends laterally across at least a portion of the width of said first header wall and at an elevation below interlocked profiles of said first and second zipper strips.